



Civilian Conservation Corps Picnic Tables

Introduction

Between 1933 and 1941 Pima County's Tucson Mountain Park (TMP) was transformed by the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). In 1961 the northern half of TMP became the Tucson Mountain District (TMD) of Saguaro National Monument.

A total of 14 CCC constructed picnic tables with benches can be found throughout the Tucson Mountain District; one at Cam-Boh, two at Ez-Kim-In-Zin, four at Mam-A-Gah, four at Signal Hill, and three at Sus. The style and construction of the picnic tables are good examples of the NPS Rustic architectural style that was common at the time (see Brief on NPS Rustic).

Description

Picnic table and bench combinations can be classified according to their size and bench configuration: small, medium, with or without wrap-around bench and large. Large tables are up to 12' long by 3'6" wide (Type A), the medium sized tables (Type B) are up to 8' long by 3'6" wide; the single small table is 3'6" by 3'. Table tops were constructed of concrete, usually about 4 inches thick, and were cast at Camp Pima and later moved to the site. The tables are supported by stone and concrete pedestals, the number of which depends on the size of the table. Large tables have three pedestals while medium sized tables have two and the small variety has one.

The most common configuration of picnic table and bench combination is one with a rectangular table with two benches and two stools. The benches, one on either side of the table, are approximately the same length as the table while the two opposing stools, one at each end of the table, are small and square (ish) in shape, and are between 14 to 18 inches in size. This arrangement is found in both large and medium varieties of picnic table.

A second configuration of picnic table and bench combination is the 3-side wrap-around bench type (Type C). This is a medium sized table with a single bench that wraps around three sides of the table (end-side-end). This variety may (Type C2) or may not (Type C1) have a tall back rest made of stone and concrete along one of its long sides.



Photographs showing three types of picnic table and bench combination. Top: medium style with wrap-around bench and tall backrest (Type C2, Signal Hill); center: large style of table and bench combination (Type A, Sus); bottom: medium type of table and bench combination (Type B Mam-A-Gah).

The small variety of picnic table and bench combination only occurs once, and this is found at Ez-Kim-In-Zin (Type D). This combination is made up of a small table, 3'6" by 3', with a single stone and concrete bench that wraps-around two sides. The thickness of the concrete table ranges from 3.5" to 4". Benches are between 18"

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and 20" wide and 18" to 20" tall. Stools range from 14" to 18" square and are also 18" to 20" tall. Except for the small table and bench combination at Ez-Kim-In-Zin, all of the stone and concrete benches and stools are topped with a smooth 3.5" to 4" thick concrete cap. Some table and bench tops have been scribed with lines imitating expansion joints.

More of the CCC picnic tables with benches can be found at Tucson Mountain Park: three at Ironwood, three at Juan Santa Cruz, and one at Gilbert Ray campground.

Visiting CCC Features

Remember, the CCC features are an important part of our local history and as such are significant cultural resources. Please be respectful and act accordingly.

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Left: an example of a Type C medium sized table with wrap-around bench combination. This one is at Signal Hill. Right: The only small style picnic table and bench combination the CCC constructed at TMD. Note that bench is constructed on top of bedrock outcrop. This picnic table is at Ez-Kim-In-Zin.

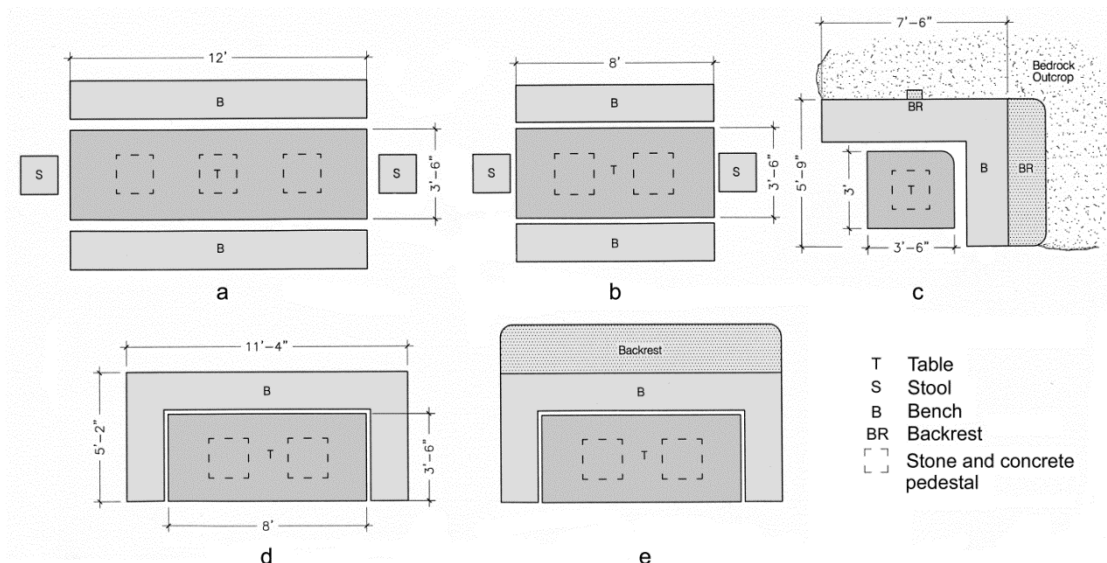


Illustration showing the varieties of table and bench styles found at TMD. a: large style table and bench combination (Type A); medium style table and bench combinations, b: Type B, d: Type C1 with wrap-around bench, e: Type C2 with wrap-around bench and backrest; c: small style table and bench combination (Type D). Illustrations are to scale.